



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

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## **GOVERNOR BREDESEN SELECTED FOR NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AWARD**

LAND CONSERVATION INITIATIVES RECOGNIZED BY THE  
NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

**Nashville, Tenn.** - Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Jim Fyke announced today that Governor Phil Bredesen has been selected as the National Recreation and Park Association's 2008 National Humanitarian Award winner for his work to preserve and protect Tennessee landscapes. Fyke nominated Bredesen for the award, which NRPA presents to an individual or organization whose concern for humanity has been expressed through park, recreation and conservation efforts that enrich people's lives.

Fyke made the announcement today at the Governor's Land and Water Forum at Cumberland Mountain State Park, where both Bredesen and Fyke met with conservation organizations, government agencies and citizens with an interest in conservation.

"Tennessee is blessed with beautiful landscapes and incredibly diverse varieties of plants and animals. Protecting these special places and making them available to enjoy and learn from is something that's personally important to me," said Bredesen. "I'm proud of the partnerships we've forged and all we have achieved in the area of land conservation, and it's an honor to receive recognition on behalf of the state of Tennessee for those efforts."

The criteria for the National Humanitarian Award includes leadership involving partnerships, work as originator of a parks and recreation or conservation project, and promotion of meaningful legislation in the area of parks and conservation.

Bredesen's accomplishments recognized by the NRPA include:

- The creation of the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, which was proposed by Governor Bredesen and approved by the General Assembly in 2005. To date, the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund has partnered to protect more than 42,500 acres across Tennessee.
- The successful completion of the 127,000-acre "Connecting the Cumberlands" conservation project, which utilized key partnerships and conservation tools to protect land and local economies in ecologically and culturally significant areas of the Northern Cumberland Plateau.
- Improvements in the quality and accessibility of Tennessee State Parks. Bredesen appointed a career parks veteran to lead the system and in 2006 removed access fees from the 23 state parks that previously charged them. In 2007, the Tennessee State Park System was selected as best in the nation by NRPA.
- Achievements prior to taking office as Governor of Tennessee, including the creation of the non-profit Land Trust for Tennessee and, as mayor of Nashville from 1991 to 1999, increasing the size of Metro Nashville's park lands by 50 percent.

(MORE)

The NRPA Board of Trustees National Awards Committee along with other authorities in the area of parks, recreation and leisure, made award selections.

“Governor Bredesen fits the criteria for the National Humanitarian Award perfectly,” said Fyke. “His focus on cultivating partnerships and leveraging resources has allowed us to accomplish conservation initiatives that wouldn’t have otherwise been possible. With the Governor’s leadership and the support of the General Assembly, we’ve been able to protect more than 200,000 acres in Tennessee since 2003.”

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national membership organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 21,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives and conservation of natural and cultural resources. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).

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